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Viewing cable 06BOGOTA2030, VALLE GOVERNOR PREDICTS URIBE VICTORY, CRITICIZES

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06BOGOTA2030**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06BOGOTA2030	2006-03-07 18:38	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Bogota

Appears in these articles:

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 002030

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/06/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ETRD](#) [ECON](#) [CO](#)
SUBJECT: VALLE GOVERNOR PREDICTS URIBE VICTORY, CRITICIZES HIS POLO COLLEAGUES, SAYS CONGRESS WILL RATIFY FTA

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood.
Reason: 1.4 (b,d)

Summary

¶11. (C) Prominent moderate leftist Governor of Valle del Cauca Department, Angelino Garzon, predicted to poloffs that Uribe would win reelection on the first ballot. Garzon will vote for the Polo DemocraticoAlternativo candidate out of loyalty rather than conviction. He criticized national Polo Democratico leaders many times, saying they make radical statements but have no responsibility for taking tough decisions that affect peoples' lives. Garzon placed himself in the "Lula/Vasquez/Bachelet" pragmatic leftist tradition and explicitly criticized Venezuelan President Chavez's management, which he said was undermining democratic institutions. Garzon said the Congress would ultimately ratify the Free Trade Agreement after much debate. End summary.

Uribe Will Win Reelection on First Round, Polo Out of Touch

¶12. (C) Garzon predicted Uribe would win reelection in May on the first ballot. During a lunch with poloffs in Cali, he said he has supported Uribe many times when the president has been attacked unfairly, including when the attacks have originated from his own party, the Polo Democratico. Garzon useduribista phrases occasionally, such as, "social development cannot take place without security." He characterized his personal relationship with Uribe as excellent.

¶13. (C) While Garzon said he would support the Polo candidate for president (Antonio Navarro or Carlos Gaviria), he said he would do so out of loyalty rather than conviction. Garzon made a number of negative comments about the Polo, suggesting several times that Governors like himself and Bogota's Mayor LuchoGarzon were more able representatives of the center left because they had to make numerous executive decisions that made a difference in peoples' lives. He said he meets regularly with constituents to listen to their grievances and insists his staff attend as well so that he can assign responsibility for addressing specific voter concerns. In contrast, he said, the Polo's other nationally known figures (he mentioned Gustavo Petro) found it easy to make "radical" statements because they had no responsibility for carrying them out.

Model is Lula, not Chavez

¶14. (C) Garzon said he was firmly in the "Lula/Vasquez/Bachelet" strand of pragmatic leftist thought ("a positive trend"), and explicitly rejected the manner in which Chavez is managing Venezuela. He said the pragmatic left knows the importance of building strong democratic institutions, while Chavez personalizes power and weakens institutions.

Congress Will Ratify FTA, but Public Outreach Essential

¶15. (C) Garzon said he expects the Congress to ratify the Free Trade Agreement after much debate, but insisted that Uribe must educate the public and interest groups on the benefits of the treaty and address the concerns of those who expect to be losers. Garzon said the FTA was very good for Valle's prominent sugar producers and would help Colombia export ethanol to the U.S. Agriculture and cereal sector representatives had already complained to him about the FTA, however. Garzon has discussed ratification with Uribe,

suggesting that the president hold many public forums to hear first hand from affected interests. The Governor wants to host an "academic-type seminar" in Cali at which he plans to invite an embassy official and a GOC representative to make presentations. He gave the strong impression that he supported the FTA when he said, "we face commercial realities," but he was anxious to ensure that perceived losers are taken into account. Garzon said he was prepared

to play a role in the debate over ratification but he said he was not sure what that role would be.

Comment

¶6. (C) Garzon is mentioned as a possible presidential contender in 2010, if the political pendulum swings left after eight years of Uribe. His comments on issues were thoughtful and pragmatic. Garzon could be a key ally on the FTA. He insisted that Uribe and the GOC more generally must conduct extensive outreach, which the president has started to do.

WOOD

=====CABLE ENDS=====